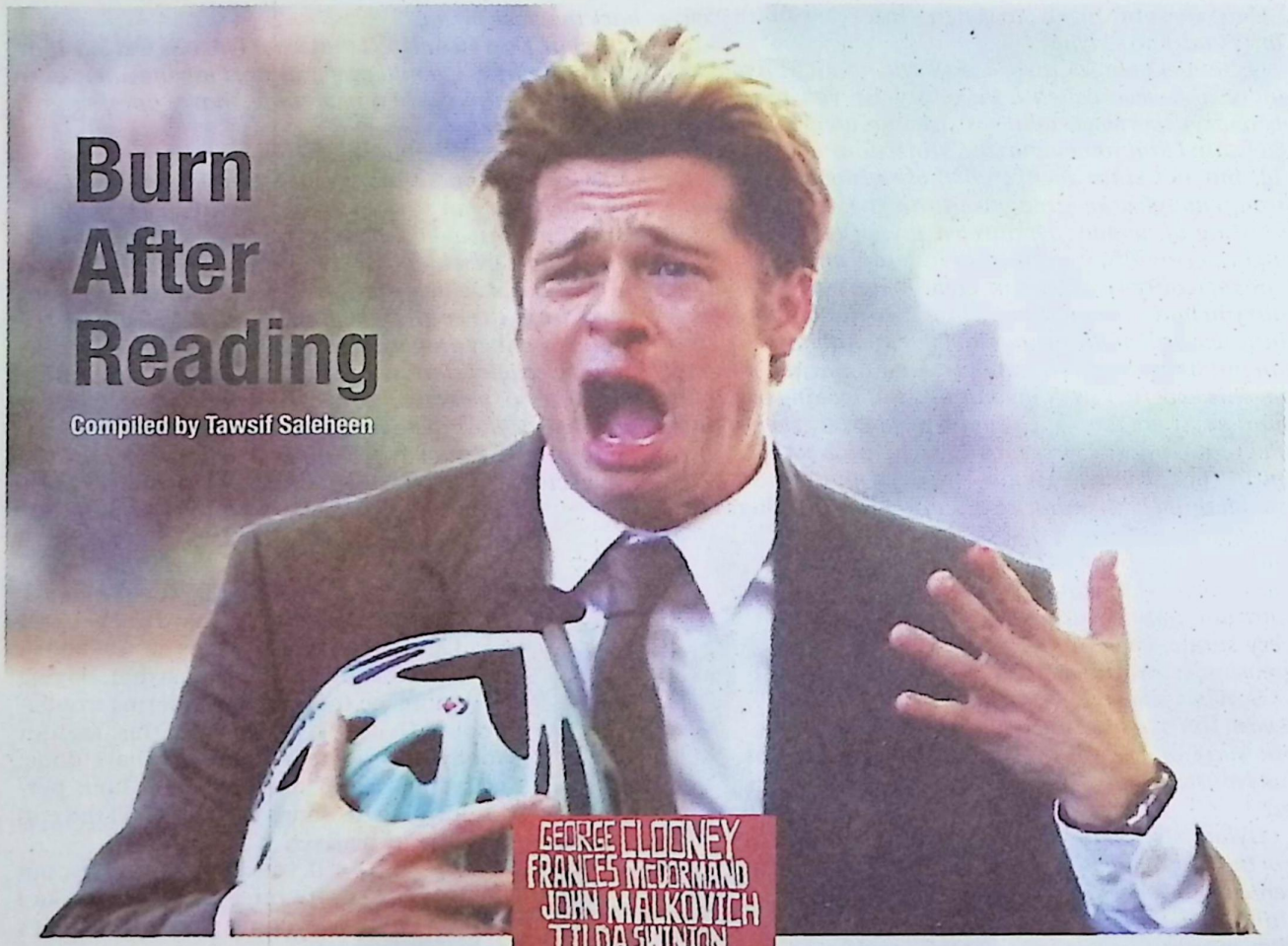
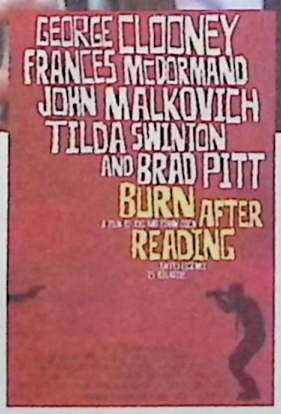


Burn After Reading

Compiled by Tawsif Saleheen



BURN After Reading stirs up a bizarre concoction between dark humor and sheer cynicism. The movie is riddled with idiosyncratic characters played by the likes of George Clooney and Brad Pitt.

In Burn After Reading, no one really knows anything. And what they do know is not very important to anyone but himself or herself. Everyone lives in his or her own little bubble of obsession and confusion. Harry (George Clooney) is a gabby federal marshal with a lot of time for wooden floor finishing. He likes laying married women who he meets through Internet dating websites. One such conquest is Linda (Frances McDormand), a jittery instructor at Hard bodies Gym who convinces herself that costly cosmetic medical procedures will make her more desirable. Osbourne Cox (John Malkovich) is a CIA spook that gets kicked downstairs because of a drinking problem. He starts to write a tell-all memoir, but does not get very far, because, you know, he drinks. He hardly pays attention to the fact that his acidic pediatrician wife Katie (Tilda Swinton) - who likes to browbeat four-year-olds - is having an affair with Harry. There is also Chad (Brad Pitt), a fitness nut and Linda's best pal at Hardbodies, who does not stop bopping and cannot live without his bike or iPod. When a CD of incomprehensible "CIA type shit" turns up on a change room floor at Hardbodies, Chad and Linda see it as a fast track to riches and certainly better buttocks. They try blackmailing Cox.

In *Burn After Reading*, there is no one to admire, save for one unlucky gentle soul. Everyone else is a clown or a petty tyrant. Yes, it is fun to watch formidable actors like Clooney, McDormand, Malkovich and Pitt play the fool, but if you are looking for a human connection, you have come to the wrong movie.

Yet even a minor Coen Brothers film has its inevitable pleasures. Few filmmakers combine such confident visual élan with witty, idiosyncratic screenwriting chops. The story, a Coen original, has some of the wittiness of a *Fargo* or *Miller's Crossing*, but this time the criminals do not even realize they are initiating a crime until it is too late.

Source: Internet